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FM USMISSION USNATO
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0403
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
INFO RUEHZG/NATO EU COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUCNOSC/ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY COOPERATION IN EUROPE PRIORITY
RUEHGB/AMEMBASSY BAGHDAD PRIORITY 0228
RUEHBW/AMEMBASSY BELGRADE PRIORITY 1323
RUEHRL/AMEMBASSY BERLIN PRIORITY 0494
RUEHBM/AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST PRIORITY 2367
RUEHHE/AMEMBASSY HELSINKI PRIORITY 0854
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD PRIORITY 0253
RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL PRIORITY 0514
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RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 0141
RUEHMD/AMEMBASSY MADRID PRIORITY 0574
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RUEHNY/AMEMBASSY OSLO PRIORITY 0516
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RUEHSF/AMEMBASSY SOFIA PRIORITY 2336
RUEHTC/AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE PRIORITY 0869
RUEHWR/AMEMBASSY WARSAW PRIORITY 4035
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 0329

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 USNATO 000046

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/24/2017

TAGS: [NATO](#) [PREL](#) [AF](#)

SUBJECT: NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL READOUT JANUARY 24, 2007

Classified By: DCM Richard G. Olson for Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

11. (C) SUMMARY:

-- Afghanistan: SYG reported that Pakistan PM Aziz will address the NAC on January 30. The outgoing JFC-Brunssum and ISAF Operational Commander General Back presented his analysis of NATO's efforts in Afghanistan stating that the Alliance's goals are too high. He called for more leadership from, and greater coordination with the UN, and advocated continuing support for tribal agreements such as the one in Musa Qala. The General opposed ground-based spraying to reduce poppy production. Back also proposed tasking the drafting of an exit strategy⁸ for Afghanistan, which was not supported by PermReps.

-- Kosovo: SYG stated that UN Special Envoy Ahtisaari will address the NAC on 16 February. The Chairman of the Military Committee (CMC) provided a briefing on transition plan for KFOR during the settlement period, to include a new international civilian presence⁸ (ICP). Several PermReps called for high-level NATO-EU political talks, with Spain, Italy, and Germany urging caution during the complex period ahead.

-- Iraq: CMC noted the Italian scoping team mission to Iraq has concluded and said that SHAPE advice on gendarmerie training is expected by the end of January. Spanish PermRep noted his country's 399,000 Euro contribution to NTM-I.

-- Missile Defense: Ambassador Nuland advised PermReps about U.S. missile defense plans with Poland and the Czech Republic; UK PermRep welcomed the announcement.

END SUMMARY.

Afghanistan

12. (C) NATO Secretary General de Hoop Scheffer reminded the NAC of the upcoming January 30 session with Pakistan Prime Minister Aziz. The SYG called for enlarging NATO's political dialogue and military cooperation with Pakistan, including (on the military side) through the Tripartite Commission (TPC). CMC General Henault briefed the results of the January 11 TPC meeting, which was held in Islamabad at the four-star level. He said that discussion of Pakistan's contentious proposal for fencing and mining the border was omitted as part of a compromise brokered by COMISAF Richards to permit the meeting to go forward. CMC said that ISAF mil-mil relations with Pakistan were &very good,8 and that military activities coordinated with Pakistan on the border had been successful in recent weeks.

13. (C) Outgoing Commander of Joint Forces Command (JFC) Brunssum and ISAF Operational Commander General Gerhard Back gave a dour report on Afghanistan and provided his intentionally "thought-provoking" recommendations. Back suggested NATO had set its goals too high in Afghanistan, which had resulted in an impatient and disappointed Afghan population that is suspicious of ISAF's motives. Noting that Afghanistan has never has a strong central government, he thought the approach of reaching tribal agreements, such as those in Musa Qala and Khost, was promising and that NATO should collect evidence on how effective the agreements prove to be, and then decide whether to support more such agreements. On counter-narcotics, he recommended against "short term actions that endanger our troops," such as ground-based spraying, until more progress is made in alternative livelihoods for adversely affected farmers. The General called for more pressure on the UN to provide the

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necessary coordination and leadership to civilian reconstruction efforts and the necessary link to security efforts. He spoke out against both the forced repatriation of Afghan refugees in Pakistan and the fencing and mining of the border, arguing that, instead, there should be major efforts to improve conditions for refugees in Pakistan and in the Pakistan's Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) to "dry up the swamp" of Taliban recruits. General Back cautioned against the use of "body counts." He emphasized that the CJSOR was the minimum military requirement and must be filled. Most controversially, he recommended the NAC task NMAs to draft an "exit strategy" withdrawing ISAF maneuver forces by the end of 2010, only leaving residual mentoring and training teams in place. He advocated planning force rotations through 2010 to assure an orderly exit strategy, not a piecemeal drawdown by nations on their own schedules.

14. (C) Back received support among PermReps for his call for greater coordination of civilian and military efforts, a more active UN role, opposition to the mining and fencing of the border, and avoiding a focus on "body counts." Many PermReps disagreed with his call for an exit strategy (specifically, Norway, The Netherlands, UK, Bulgaria, Romania), saying it was important not to set a date since the Afghan people needed reassurance NATO would not leave prematurely. Dutch PermRep Schaper said NATO should think about a "handover strategy" rather than an "exit strategy," while others said that NATO should define conditions for a handover, rather than specifying a date for withdrawal. Spanish PermRep Benavides supported Back's call for an "exit strategy," but said it should not be made public. Italian PermRep Moreno said Italy was considering doubling its commitment to train customs officers and doing more to train the ANP.

15. (C) In response to a question on counter-narcotics, DSACEUR General Reith said President Karzai had decided against ground-based spraying for this year, and would rely again on manual eradication. In Helmand Province, eradication would be focused on the central regions where development zones were already in place. The governor of Helmand also wanted eradication in outlying areas to show farmers they would pay a price for going along with Taliban

control.

Kosovo

16. (SBU) The SYG briefly touched on the Serbian election results, saying that the elections occurred without incident, and called on Serbia to form a new government without delay. He outlined the status process timeline and said that following the January 26 Contact Group meeting, UN Special Envoy Ahtisaari would travel to the region on 2 February to present his proposal to both parties. The SYG mentioned that Ahtisaari would address the NAC, most likely on 16 February. The SYG again expressed his hope that the Transatlantic Lunch on 26 January would pave the way for in-depth NATO-EU discussions on the way ahead in Kosovo.

17. (C) The CMC briefed the NAC on the proposed three-phased plan for KFOR operations during the upcoming time period from UN Special Envoy Ahtisaari's status proposal announcement to a UNSCR and the start of a new international civilian presence (ICP) in Kosovo. CMC stated that the military committee will present to the NAC a Transitional Directive that will provide KFOR with the framework for operations from the time of a UNSCR until the stand-up of an ICP, (predicted to be 120 days). Several PermReps (including NL, BE, IT, UK, NO) expressed strong desire for higher level political discussions with the EU on Kosovo. The Spanish, Italians and Germans expressed caution concerning the complex

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period ahead and emphasized the need to help the moderate faction in Serbia to form a government. The UK PermRep stressed the priority of getting a settlement and supporting Ahtisaari. The German PermRep mentioned that members representing the EU Troika would be traveling to Belgrade in February to discuss the status of stabilization and accession talks. Lastly, the SYG mentioned that he intends to visit both Belgrade and Pristina at some point during the upcoming settlement period, when the timing is right and in consultation with Ahtisaari.

Darfur

18. (SBU) The SYG noted that the ongoing African Union (AU) Summit will address Darfur, a possible AU peacekeeping mission in Somalia, and the selection of a new AU Chairman. The SYG will report next week on the outcome of this summit, including any implications it might have for NATO's involvement in Darfur and any future role in Somalia.

Iraq

19. (SBU) CMC noted that the Italian scoping team had concluded its visit to Iraq's national police headquarters and potential training sites. He said SHAPE advice on gendarmerie training was expected by the end of January. CMC informed the NAC that the first senior NCO course began at Kirkush and a Mobile Training Team (MTT) will deliver the NATO leadership and management modules. Spanish Ambassador Benavides noted Spain's 399,000 Euros contribution to NTM-I.

Missile Defense

10. (C) Following up her informal briefing to PermReps at their weekly luncheon on January 23, Ambassador Nuland drew from guidance (State 07445) to officially advise the NAC that the U.S. had formally requested that bilateral negotiations begin with both the Czech Republic and Poland on placing U.S. missile defense (MD) assets in their countries. She noted the valuable contributions that Denmark and the UK have already made in support of our MD architecture and informed the NAC that the U.S. was also acting in a completely transparent manner with Russia. Both CZ and PL PermReps stated their nations' willingness to begin negotiations, their desire to keep Allies informed throughout the process, and the importance of this issue to NATO in enhancing Allied

security, as well as the security of Europe as a whole. The UK PermRep welcomed the U.S. announcement, noting the important support provided to the U.S. MD system by the UK radar site at RAF Fylingdales. (Note: The Ambassador separately circulated a letter to all PermReps with a copy of the points in State 07445, Para 5.)

State of the Union Speech

¶11. (U) Ambassador Nuland drew PermReps, attention to the President's State of the Union address, noting that the President had put strong emphasis on energy security and independence, as well as the need for bipartisan support for efforts to secure Iraq. She also highlighted President Bush's mention of NATO in the context of its leading the fight in Afghanistan. Copies of the State of the Union address were made available to PermReps.

NULAND